



Insecurity and its trends on the academic performance of basic science students in some selected secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial district

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Abstract

The study investigated insecurity and its trends on the academic performance of Basic science students in some selected secondary schools in Rivers East senatorial district. The study was guided by four (4) objectives which are to investigate the trend of insecurity in secondary schools' environment in Rivers east senatorial district, examine insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students in Rivers East senatorial district; and determine the roles of government and other relevant agencies in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools, the survey research design was adopted for the study. Population of the study consisted of 300 teachers and students from selected secondary schools in the study area. The sample size of 100 was derived using Taro Yamane statistical formula. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted for the study. A self-structured questionnaire titled: Insecurity and the Academic Performance of Basic Science Students Questionnaire (IAPBSSQ) was used for data collection. Data was analyzed using simple percentages for demographic data. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions. Findings revealed that insecurity situations in secondary schools in Rivers East senatorial district is capable of affecting students' performance negatively such that they may have poor grades or perform badly in external examinations. It was recommended that government should set aside a reasonable amount of education budget which will be directed to students' security. This would help in tackling the insecurity problems faced by students in schools.

Keywords: Insecurity, trend, academic performance, basic science, some selected schools

Introduction

In Nigerian education sector the insecurity trend is highly alarming which is been masterminded by the hoodlums namely; (kidnappers, cultists, ritualists and many more). Insecurity isn't unarguably a bane to progress in all ramification of life. It does not just imply physical unsafety, but also transcends to emotional, psychological discomfort, anxiety and fear in our homes, churches, market places, schools etc (Ojukwu and Nwanna, 2016) [22, 23, 24].

For the purpose of emphasis, the concept of insecurity connotes the state or quality of being insecure, while security is the direct opposite. According to Onifode (2013) insecurity is the dynamic condition which involves the relative ability of an entity to counter threats to its core values and interests as well as its primary beneficiaries. In the school environment, the primary beneficiaries are the students; therefore, once the school environment is insecure, the students are top priority. Abraham Maslow (1942) [14] described an insecure individual as one who perceives the world as a life threatening jungle, feels unsafe, unhappy, rejected, hostile, and pessimistic, shows a sign of tension, conflict and guilt, and tends to be neurotic and generally egocentric. This therefore implies that when students study or play in an environment that is characterized by kidnap, dearth of teaching and learning materials which significantly makes learning difficult, poor social environment and so on, such students may suffer socially, mentally, emotionally; and it makes sense hypothetically to state that all these are likely to affect not only their behaviour and psychosocial adjustment but may also affect their academic performance, especially as regards basic science as a subject, which

remains a compulsory subject that requires utmost attention, stability of mind, and consistence.

Insecurity has been identified as being a bane to education patronage and development, especially among students in junior secondary schools. (Hausler, Urban & McCorquodale, 2013; The World Bank, 2018; Abdulrasheed, Onuselogu & Obioma, 2015); (Abdulrasheed, Onuselogu & Obioma, 2015); summarized that as the neighbourhood become insecure, schools, colleges and students may be looted, properties destroyed or abandoned, teaching and learning becomes relatively ineffective. Mostly laboratory where practicals are conducted will be looted by hoodlums which may not be easy for government to replace. The former Governor of Rivers State, Barr. Nyesom E. Wike expressed his grievances on the prevailing illiteracy level in Rivers state, suggesting that basic education has been experiencing serious problems in the state as a result of insecurity (www.naijanews.com).

Basic education in rivers east senatorial district of Rivers State and the other two (2) senatorial district were known to have quality facilities and educational resources for teaching and learning as a result of the project on educational development carried out in the entire twenty-three Local Government Areas of the State during the Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi's administration as governor of the state; with free books, and other materials made available for students (2013). However, the issue of insecurity, lack of proper management and continuity of government policies have clearly disorganized the infrastructure, as most of these gadgets, books and other resource materials have become porous to insecurity, some have been hijacked, sold out or

destroyed, making it difficult for students, especially the basic science students to learn without the basic science apparatus and resource materials that could have made the teaching and learning of science process skills more effective.

According to Ojukwu and Nwanma (2016) ^[22, 23, 24], an insecure secondary school environment, including the dilapidated conditions and teachers' negative attitude to condone and accept the emotional needs of students, may lead to undue influences and clashes of a local community interfering with school business. Also, they stated that in an insecure school environment the psychological problems of the students, especially the basic science students, are never met or carefully handled, according to (Ojukwu & Nwanma, 2015). The basic science students still remain one of the most disadvantaged when these school resource materials are damaged as most of their science facilities and resource materials are rare to find in most junior secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district; thus when destroyed, may take a long time to be replaced, to the detriment of the students.

Also Ojukwu and Nwanma (2015) reported that in a secondary school environment characterized by insecurity, anxiety and fear is the norm in school. In such situations, students may perform poorly in class and they may be allowed to freely use handsets and other incriminating materials for examination malpractice during examinations because, even the teachers are aware that the students were not well taught as a result of the stolen school materials and science equipment. The external results of schools in Rivers East Senatorial district, especially basic science, are always bad as a result of poor teaching climate, inadequate security, and stolen or destroyed science facilities of the school as having been shown by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) results annually. Other instances of insecurity in the school environment include sometimes female staff and students complain of sexual harassment or rape (Ojukwu & Nwanma, 2016) ^[22, 23, 24]. Also, parents complain that their children are bullied and injured by cult group, poorly ventilated as to prevent cult groups who make learning generally uncomfortable for students (Ghazi, Shahzada, Tariq & Khan, 2013).

The above illustrated school environment may most likely affect students' academic performance in junior secondary school's students. Thus, it is based on this background that this study shall critically examine the issues of insecurity and its trends on the academic performance of basic science students in junior secondary schools, with an in-depth study of selected secondary schools in Rivers East senatorial district Rivers State.

Statement of the problem

Recently major stakeholders in Education sector such as government, Non-governmental organization (NGOs), communities, parents' teachers' association (PTA), schools even students and many others have been lamenting over the poor quality of students' performance in both learning and character, but these stakeholders aren't sure of what the actual issue may be as fingers point in different directions. Researchers and authors have speculated reasons for the failure on the part of the students in junior secondary schools including those in Rivers east senatorial district to acquire the necessary moral, social, psychological and academic skills to cope with demands of life and living in and outside the school. Their findings and suggestions tend

to point at those issues which tend to waste students' time and then have false notions about true life situations. Others have focused on teaching and learning materials as well as students themselves. Some of cause mentions the quality of schools and teachers, no laboratory, no library social amenities and what are views. An area that seems to have been neglected by past researchers is insecurity and its trends on the academic performance of basic science students in secondary schools. Social media reports are many on the number of materials lost as a result of the dreadful activities of cultism in the area that seem to be alarming. As if some places in the rivers east senatorial district can be walled off from the negative impact of insecurity; because, most secondary schools have also become hot spots where cases of insecurity are recorded (Ojukwu & Nwanma, 2015). The main problem of this study therefore is to investigate the effect of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students in rivers east senatorial district, rivers state.

As a result of the high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, especially the youths, they are adversely attracted to violent crime (Adagba, *et al*, 2012). Nwagbosa (2012) argued that the failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one of the major causes of insecurity in the country.

Ochigbo *et al.* (2021) ^[19], conducted a study on the effect of insecurity on academic performances of secondary schools' students in Benue State. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of insecurity in school on academic performance of secondary schools' students in Benue State. Major findings revealed that factors that constituent insecurity among secondary school students in Benue State that influence academic performance. It's on record that most Universal Basic Education Schools (UBE) in Rivers State are fenced during the Rotimi Ameachi administration as the Governor of Rivers State within 2012/2013 and private schools by they own as to secure students. From the office of student's affairs 22th March, 2023. The vice chancellor of IAUE commence the fencing of the internal (surroundings of the school due to the trend of insecurity in the university earlier before then the students of RSU were madly robbed and some female students raped, that is to mention the high level of insecurity isn't only in the secondary schools also in tertiary institutions which also affect their academic performances.

Ojukwu, M.O. (2017) ^[25] carried out a study on the effect of insecurity of school environment on the academic performance of secondary school students in Imo state, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended that owners of schools and other stakeholders in education should take bold steps to fence and protect school environments from intruders to ensure the safety of the students.

Purpose of the study

The primary purpose of this study is to critically examine the trend of insecurity in the academic performance of basic science students in secondary schools.

However, the specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Mention the issues that constitute insecurity in secondary school environment in rivers east senatorial district.

2. Examine the effects of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students in rivers east senatorial district.
3. Determine the roles of government and other relevant organizations in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What are the issues that constitute insecurity in secondary schools’ environment in Rivers east senatorial district?
2. What effect has insecurity in the school environment’s academic performance of basic science students in Rivers east senatorial district?
3. What are the roles of government and other specialized organizations in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools in Rivers east senatorial district?

Hypotheses

The following are the hypotheses of the study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between issues that constituent environment insecurity in secondary schools and academic performance of basic science students in Rivers east senatorial district.

Ho2: There is no significant effect on the relationship between insecurity in the schools’ environment and the academic performance of students Rivers east senatorial district.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between the roles of government and other relevant organization in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools and academic performance of basic science student in Rivers east senatorial district.

Significance of the Study

Considerable attempts may have been made at researching on some variables or factors affecting students’ academic performance but little or nor has focused on the trend of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students. Also, given the wide ranging effects of students’ poor academic performance and its concomitant social and destructive emotional effects on the students, parents, society and the nation, it is appropriate and should be a welcome development to investigate the effect of insecurity of the school environment on the academic performance of students with the view of proffering solutions for a better performance by students.

Also, this discuss is auspicious and timely to the extent that it shall immensely add to the already existing literatures that deal with the reasons for the poor academic performance of students in secondary schools. Though, this study is peculiar as it stretches its roots to the academic performance of basic science student’s base on the trend of insecurity, which makes it more topical and precise.

Sample and sampling techniques

The total number of respondents used for the study is 300 and the sample of the study is the portion or section of the population that the researcher wants to cover, while the sampling technique is the method/formula for arriving at

that sample. This study shall use the Taro Yamane formula which is as follows: $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$

Where n= is the required sample size from the population of the study.

N= the whole population under study.

e= the precision or sampling error which is usually 0.01, 0.10 or 0.5

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$N=300; e= 0.1; e^2= 0.01$$

$$n = \frac{300}{1 + 300(0.1)^2}$$

$$n= 100.$$

Therefore, a sample size of 100 respondents out of the entire population of 300 respondents would therefore be the lowest acceptable number of responses to maintain a 95% confidence level.

Procedure for data collection

The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to the respondents by visiting the four (4) selected secondary schools randomly. The completed questionnaires were collected back after given interval from the respondents in the selected schools.

Data analysis procedure

The data collected in this study were analyzed with the use of the simple percentage analysis for the demographic information and response to research questions raised in the study.

Results and discussions

Demographic characteristics

This section shall present and analyze the primary data collected from the respondents. The data are presented as follows:

- **Tabulation of results.**
- **Analyses of responses.**

The researcher presents the data in a tabular form using the simple percentage method, having retrieved the questionnaires previously distributed.

Table 1: Rate of returns of questionnaires

Description	Responses	%
Correctly filled and returned.	90	90
Incorrectly filled, but returned.	6	6
Unreturned.	4	4
Total:	100	100

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

The table above clearly presents the rate of returns of the questionnaires that were previously distributed to respondents. The table shows that 90(90%) of the instrument was correctly filled, 6(6%) was incorrectly filled while 4(4%) was not returned. This implies that the return rate of the instrument was high.

Table 2: Category of respondents

Category	Frequency	%
Students	50	56
Teachers	40	44
Total	90	100

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

The table above presents the category of respondents that the questionnaires were distributed to. The table shows that 50(56%) respondents were students, while 40(44%) respondents were teachers. This implies that the questionnaires were fairly distributed among the selected categories of respondents.

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

Description	Frequency	%
10+ years	16	18
11+ years	24	27
12+ years	32	35
13+ years and above.	18	20
Total	90	100

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

The table above presents the age distribution of our respondents. From the table above, respondents between the ages brackets of 10+ years were 16(18%), 11+ years were 24(27%), 12+ years were 32(35%), while 13+ years and above were 18(20%). This implies that most of our respondents were adults.

Table 4: Sex distribution of respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Males	46	51
Females	44	49
Total	90	100

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

The table above presents the sex distribution of respondents. Makes were 46(51%), while females were 44(49%). This implies that the sex distribution of respondents were relatively even.

Findings

Research Question 1: What are the issues that constitute insecurity in secondary school environment in rivers east senatorial district?

Table 5: The issues that constitute insecurity in secondary school environment in rivers east senatorial district
N= 90

Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Decision
Deviant behaviour	30 (120)	46 (138)	10 (20)	6 (6)	3.2	Accepted
Cultism	74 (296)	12 (36)	2 (6)	2 (2)	3.8	Accepted
Poor school facilities	78 (312)	10 (30)	2 (4)	0 (0)	3.8	Accepted
School sports	14 (56)	12 (36)	62 (124)	2 (2)	2.4	Rejected
Community issues	70 (280)	16 (48)	4 (8)	0 (0)	3.7	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.4	

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

From the table above, the question sort to find out the factors that constitute insecurity in secondary school environment in rivers east senatorial district. From the table, item 1 has a mean score of 3.2 which shows that deviant behaviour is a factor that constitutes insecurity in secondary schools. Item 2 has a mean score of 3.8 which shows that cultism is also a factor. Item 3 has a mean of 3.8 signifying that poor school facilities is also a factor. Item 4 has a mean of 2.4 and it was rejected because it did not meet the

criterion average mean of 2.5, showing that school sports is not a constituting factor of insecurity in secondary schools. Item 5 has a mean of 3.7 showing that the district (rivers east senatorial district) issue is also one of the issues that constitutes insecurity in secondary schools in the area. However, with a grand mean of 3.4, it implies that there are quite a lot of issues that constitute insecurity in secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of insecurity on secondary school students in rivers east senatorial district?

Table 6: The effects of insecurity on secondary school students in rivers east senatorial district
N = 90

Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Decision
Fear	72 (248)	12 (36)	6 (12)	0 (0)	3.3	Accepted
Anxiety	41 (164)	14 (42)	31 (62)	4 (4)	3.0	Accepted
Absence from school	32 (128)	40 (120)	10 (20)	8 (8)	3.1	Accepted
Poor relationship in school	12 (48)	16 (48)	60 (120)	2 (2)	2.4	Rejected
Grand Mean					3.0	

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

From the table above, it shows a mean analysis of the effects of insecurity on secondary school students in rivers east senatorial district. Item 1 was accepted with a mean score of 3.3, which implies that fear is an effect of insecurity on secondary school students. Item 2 was accepted with a mean score of 3.0, this shows that anxiety is also an effect of insecurity on students. Item 3 was accepted with a mean score of 3.2, which implies that absence from school is also effect of insecurity. Item 4 with a mean score of 2.4 was rejected as it did not meet the criterion mean of 2.5, this implies that poor relationship in school is not an effect of insecurity on secondary school students in rivers east senatorial district.

Research question 3: What are the effects of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students in rivers east senatorial district

Table 7: The effects of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students in rivers east senatorial district
N= 90

Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Decision
Poor performance in tests	72 (288)	12 (36)	6 (12)	0 (0)	3.7	Accept
Poor performance in examination	41 (164)	14 (42)	31 (62)	4 (4)	3.0	Accept
Repetition of class	32 (128)	40 (120)	10 (20)	8 (8)	3.1	Accept
Drop out from school	12 (48)	16 (48)	60 (120)	2 (2)	2.4	Rejected
Grand Mean					3.1	

Source: Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

The table above shows the effects of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students in rivers

east senatorial district. From the table, item 1 (Poor performance in tests) was accepted with a mean score of 3.7; Item 2 (Poor performance in exams) was accepted with a mean score of 3.0; item 3 (Repetition of class) was accepted with a mean score of 3.1; while item 4 (Drop-out from school) was rejected with a mean score of 2.4 which did not meet the criterion mean score of 2.5. This implies that, in this study, poor performance in tests, poor performance in exams and repetition of class are seen as the possible effects of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students.

Research Question 4: What are the roles of government and other relevant agencies in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district?

Table 8: The roles of government and other relevant organizations in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district.
N= 90

Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Decision
Provision of school facilities	15 (60)	75 (225)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.2	Accepted
Maintenance of school facilities	16 (64)	60 (180)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2.7	Accepted
Increment of teachers' salaries	10 (40)	8 (24)	40 (80)	32 (32)	2.0	Rejected
Providing security personnel in secondary schools	4 (16)	10 (30)	30 (60)	46 (46)	1.7	Rejected
Sponsoring enlightenment campaigns against insecurity in secondary schools	41 (164)	14 (42)	4 (8)	31 (31)	2.7	
Grand Mean					2.5	

Nwala Fieldwork, 2024

From the table above, item 1 (Providing of school facilities) was accepted with a mean score of 3.2 as the role of government and other relevant agencies in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district. Item 2 (maintenance of school facilities) was accepted with a mean score of 2.7; item 3 (increment of teacher’s salaries) was rejected with a mean score of 2.0; item 4 (providing security personnel in secondary schools) was rejected with a mean score of 1.7; while item 5 (Sponsoring enlightenment campaigns against insecurity) was accepted with a mean score of 2.7. This implies that the roles of government and other relevant agencies in managing the trends of insecurity in secondary schools are to provide the necessary facilities and support.

Summary

The primary objective of the study was to examine the insecurity and its trends in the academic performance of basic science students in rivers east senatorial district. The researcher reviewed related literatures on insecurity trends, academic performance, insecurity challenges faced in the school environment It was established empirically that there is a relationship between insecurity and the academic performance of students. The limited research on this motivated the researcher to carry out this study.

The study adopted a public survey design which involved gathering data from the opinions of people concerning a particular issue of interest. The survey design employed enabled the researcher to be able to generalize the characteristics of the entire population because of its sample. The target populations were students and teachers in randomly selected secondary schools in rivers east senatorial district. The study used a Taro Yamane sampling method/technique. The Taro Yamane sampling was used to obtain the lowest acceptable number of responses to maintain a 95% confidence level.

The instruments which were used to collect data in this study included questionnaires and observation. Questionnaires were used to collect data from undergraduate students, while observations were used to obtain salient facts or points from respondents. The collected data was analyzed using the simple percentage method, and the results were presented in condensed form in terms of tables and figures. The findings for the research questions of this study are as follows:

The first objective is to identify the factors that constitute insecurity in secondary schools. From findings it shows that some of issues that constitute insecurity are deviant behaviour, cultism poor school facilities and the district issue.

On the second objective sort to find out the effects of insecurity in secondary school environment. From findings, a good number of students and teachers opined that fear, anxiety and absence from school were the possible effects of insecurity on secondary school students. However, so many students disliked the idea of “poor relationship in school”.

The third objective is to find out the effects of insecurity on the academic performance of basic science students. From findings, it shows that most basic science students tend to have poor performance in tests, poor performance in exam and they may repeat classes.

Finally, the last objective sort to find out the role of government and other related agencies in managing insecurity trends in secondary schools; from findings, it is clear that most students and teachers feel that the government should provide school facilities, manages them properly and sponsor enlightenment campaigns against insecurity in secondary schools.

Conclusion

From the study findings. it is apparent that many teachers and students in the study area have similar opinion on the insecurity trends in secondary schools in Rivers east senatorial district, though their opinions vary very slightly as a result of age, technology and level in school. Insecurity is a universal concept and it is believed that opinions may vary according to place and period of time. However, this study has critically scrutinized the insecurity trends in secondary schools in Rivers east senatorial district.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study the following are the recommendations;

1. The government should strive and set aside a reasonable amount of education budget which will be directed to students’ security. This would help in tackling the financial problems faced by basic science students in rivers east senatorial district.

2. Government should mandate all private schools' owners to fence their schools as to save the life and property of the school which will encouraged academic performance of the students
3. Stakeholders and NGOs should discourage cultism, community interference and kidnapping within and outside the school premises.

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